

March 8, 2005

Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**REQUEST TO ADOPT THE CHILDREN'S PLANNING COUNCIL'S
RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE "SAFELY
SURRENDER BABY LAW" CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE 1255.7**

(3 Votes)

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:

1. Adopt the five recommendations described in Attachment A of this report to enhance implementation of the "Safely Surrender Baby Law," California Health and Safety Code 1255.7
2. Instruct the Chief Administrative Officer, in consultation with Children's Planning Council (CPC) and the Interagency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN) to report back to the Board of Supervisors every six months for the next eighteen months on the progress in implementing these recommendations and instruct the County agencies named in these recommendations to provide the information required for these reports.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

On December 7, 2004, the Board requested that the CPC reconvene the Safe Haven Task Force to evaluate and review the County's efforts related to the implementation of California's "Safely Surrender Baby (SSB) Law," and establish a revised plan and set of recommendations for the County to implement to eventually reach the goal of zero babies abandoned in the County of Los Angeles.

Safe Haven Task Force II

On January 24, 2005, the CPC reconvened the Safe Haven Task Force to assess the progress of the implementation of the original recommendations, and make Phase II recommendations to boost the effectiveness of the original initiative. Attachment B lists the Task Force II members and their affiliations.

Background

On February 5, 2002, the Board requested that the CPC convene a task force to develop a report with recommendations for more effectively implementing the SSB Law enacted in January 2001.

Based on available data on infant abandonment, the first Safe Haven Task Force, determined that there was no clear, discernable set of demographics for mothers who were at-risk for abandoning their babies. Therefore, they recommended an approach to reach women throughout the County who are in denial about, or concealing their pregnancies, may be socially isolated and are in crisis regarding their pregnancies.

The 12 recommendations they developed, which the Board approved on June 4, 2002, encompassed a multi-faceted, long-term, systemic approach targeting *all* women of childbearing age. They reflect a concerted effort to inform County residents about the SSB Law and where and how to safely surrender a baby.

Data collection regarding abandoned infants has been improved with the implementation of the Board ordered SSB Law data reporting system. In 2001, when the SSB Law was enacted, no babies were safely surrendered in Los Angeles County and 14 were abandoned. Between 2002 and to the present 32 babies have been safely surrendered and 31 babies were found abandoned in the County. While the abandonment of even one infant is a tragedy, the safe surrender data are encouraging regarding the public's awareness of the safe surrender option. Attachment C is an excerpt from the ICAN's report of "Safely Surrendered and Abandoned Babies—2002/2003" and provides additional information.

Assessment of Initial Recommendations

Safe Haven Task Force II reviewed the initial Task Force's recommendations and their implementation status. Task Force II determined the original recommendations were well informed and comprehensive, implementation was strengthened by the Board's interest and involvement and reinforcement and further promotion was needed to enhance their effectiveness. The initial plan implementation strengthened the preventive aspects of the law; expanded the range of Safe Surrender Sites; enhanced services to women of childbearing age and their families, by educating health and human services providers about the dynamics of newborn abandonment and the SSB Law; and initiated a widespread public information campaign, in partnership with the State, to disseminate information about the SSB Law and where and how to safely surrender a baby. Attachment D provides highlights regarding the implementation status of the initial 12 recommendations.

Overview of Task Force Phase II Approach and Recommendations

To enhance the effectiveness of the original recommendations, Task Force II makes five recommendations. These recommendations seek to:

- (1) Make the SSB Law permanent;
- (2) Encourage individuals, especially clergy and health and human services professionals, to become knowledgeable about the SSB Law, so they can assist mothers who choose to safely surrendered their babies;
- (3) Revise the SSB Law training curriculum to be more flexible, and to include more information, such as relinquishment for adoption, and how individuals can assist mothers to safely surrender their babies;
- (4) Develop a proposal for an updated and enhanced public information campaign, and,
- (5) Expedite the State's finalization and implementation of curricula on healthy sexual development for middle- and high-school students that include information about the SSB Law.

Additional Commitments to Support Phase II Recommendations

Task Force participants volunteered their organizations to additional actions to strengthen the SSB Law Phase II implementation efforts. These include: (1) ICAN will contact other counties and States to access information about their SSB laws and any related data they have, to better inform ongoing implementation efforts; (2) the Perinatal Advisory Council for Leadership, Advocacy, and Collaboration (PAC/LAC) will partner with ICAN, the County departments of Health, and Children and Family Services, and the Hospital Association of Southern California to conduct SSB Law training to staff in hospitals throughout Los Angeles County; and (3) the Sheriff's Department will disseminate information to incarcerated woman, who are pregnant, about the SSB Law and other options, such as relinquishment for adoption, and mobilize its Community/Law Enforcement Partnership Programs (CLEPP) to disseminate information to schools and community-based organizations, including Neighborhood Watch groups, about the SSB Law and how and where to safely surrender an infant.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

These recommendations contribute to the achievement of County Strategic Plan Goal 5: Children and Families' Well-Being.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The implementation of some elements of these recommendations will have start-up, implementation, and/or maintenance costs associated with them. The organizations identified as responsible for implementing the recommendations will include cost analyses in the implementation plans they are being asked to submit to the Board.

To minimize costs, the Task Force members envisioned leveraging federal and State matching funds with grants from private foundations, and maintaining and expanding partnerships with the State, counties adjoining Los Angeles, and local community-based organizations.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

None.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES

The Task Force has determined that, working in a continued partnership with the State, surrounding counties, and local community-based organizations will serve to support existing services at County and community sites. In fact, by encouraging members of the community, through an enhanced public awareness campaign and expanded training opportunities, to learn about the SSB Law and how they can support mothers at-risk, the recommendations provide exponentially expanded support opportunities for these mothers within their communities and at service sites.

The Children's Planning Council expresses its appreciation to the Board for the opportunity to reconvene, on its behalf, the Safe Haven Task Force II that conducted this review and prepared these recommendations. We also want to recognize all the members of Task Force II for their dedication and commitment. Government alone cannot implement the SSB Law; it requires a concerted community effort. This is an ideal example of how bringing government and community together can best solve problems and improve the well being of children and families in Los Angeles County.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Antonovich, Chair
Los Angeles County Children's Planning Council

Attachments (4)

Honorable Board of Supervisors

March 8, 2005

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cc: Chief Administrative Office
Chief Information Office
County Counsel
Department of Children and Family Services
Department of Health Services
Department of Human Resources
Department of Mental Health
District Attorney
Fire Department
Sheriff's Department
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Inter-Agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect

Safe Haven Task Force II
**RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**
Endorsed by the Safe Haven Task Force Phase II on February 4, 2005

RECOMMENDATION 1: Direct the Chief Administrative Office (CAO) in consultation with the District Attorney (DA) and County Counsel, Children's Planning Council (CPC) the Interagency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN), and other appropriate entities—to work with The California Department of Social Services (CDSS), State legislators and other stakeholders to support SB 116, to eliminate the sunset provision in the Safe Surrender Baby (SSB) Law, California Health and Safety Code 1255.7.

Justification: The SSB Law should be made permanent so it can continue to provide the safe surrender option to a parent who might otherwise abandon an infant, and help to achieve the Los Angeles County vision of no abandoned babies.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Encourage members of the community, especially health and human services providers and representatives of faith-based organizations, to obtain information about how they can, as individuals, support mothers who choose to safely surrender their babies.

Justification: The SSB Law provides liability protection for a person who, in good faith and without compensation, provides assistance during a safe surrender event. Government alone cannot make implementation of the SSB Law effective; it requires a concerted community effort. Encouraging members of the community, particularly private health care providers, other health and human services professionals and the clergy to learn about how they can assist mothers who choose to safely surrender their babies, increases the number of people prepared to support mothers who are at-risk, and exponentially expands the options and support available to these mothers within their communities.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Instruct the Director of ICAN—in collaboration with the CAO, County Counsel, the DA, the Fire Chief, members of the New Directions Task Force, First Five LA, the Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC), Long Beach and Pasadena city health departments and the California Council of Churches, and other faith-based organizations and key stakeholders—to: (a) revise and enhance the SSB Law training with information regarding how individuals can assist mothers who choose to safely surrender their babies; and (b) provide the SSB Law-related training

to appropriate County staff and promote and encourage private health care providers, private health and human services professionals, the clergy and other interested individuals to participate in the training to enhance their abilities to support these mothers within their communities; and (c) inform all County employees of the SSB Law particularly those provisions related to the responsibilities of, and legal protections for individuals assisting with a safe surrender.

Justification: Available data regarding mothers who abandon their babies reflects that they are often in denial of their pregnancy or seek to keep their pregnancies a secret. Outreach and education to service providers and community members is essential to educate them about how to identify, reach out and support women who are in crisis regarding their pregnancies. The SSB Law training is designed to provide this information, as well as information regarding other options such as relinquishment for adoption.

Feedback from initial training efforts demonstrates a need for the current standardized training to have enhanced flexibility to meet the unique needs of specific audiences. To this end, the revised training program would cover subjects including: (a) effective techniques for assisting women who may be concealing or denying their pregnancies, (b) information about, and hand outs designed especially for the mother at-risk and her family, regarding prevention and options available, including relinquishment for adoption, and safe surrendering; locations of Safe Surrender Sites; and existing prevention and support programs and their contact information; (c) the social, cultural, and psychological aspects of childbearing; (d) ways to assist the mother after delivery, whether she relinquishes the child or not, including her own medical care and family planning options, and (e) specific health and legal information for individuals and staff who are likely to receive/accept safely surrendered babies.

By reminding all County employees of the SSB Law, training appropriate County staff, and encouraging members of the community, particularly private health and human services professionals, clergy, to learn more about how to support mothers who choose to safely surrender their babies, the County will significantly expand the number of people prepared to support mothers who are at risk, and expand the options and support available to these mothers within their communities.

RECOMMENDATION 4: Instruct the Fire Chief, in collaboration with the CAO and First Five LA to reconvene a SSB Law Public Information Work Group of key stakeholders including: members of the New Directions Task Force, ICAN, religious leaders, media, community representatives and other appropriate local, regional, and State organizations, to evaluate the Phase I Public Information Strategy and to recommend a Phase II Public

Information Strategy, including a timeline and cost considerations, and report back to the Board within 120 days.

Justification: A fundamental part of the originally recommended approach was a broad-based public information campaign. The originally-convened Task Force believed, and the reconvened Task Force agrees, that one of the factors limiting the effective implementation of the SSB Law is a general lack of knowledge about the law and where and how to safely surrender a baby.

Although some data demonstrate an increased awareness of the law, the County has yet to reach that critical mass of service providers and the general public who are knowledgeable about the law. Public information campaigns take years to attain their desired impact, and there is more work to be done related to this issue in Los Angeles County. By continuing to promote a multifaceted public information campaign, including utilization of the SSB Law Speakers Bureau, the County can, over time, increase the general public's knowledge about the law and expand support for mothers at-risk and their babies.

RECOMMENDATION 5: Request the Superintendent of the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) to work with CDSS and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Board of Education, and the California State PTA to expedite finalization and implementation of curricula on healthy sexual development for middle- and high-school students, that includes information about pregnancy prevention and teen pregnancy; the SSB Law, and relinquishment for adoption.

Justification: To date, LACOE has provided input and detailed review of the materials developed by CDSS to augment and implement curricula to educate all California middle- and high-school students about healthy sexual development. This includes information about options available to women who have unplanned pregnancies, including relinquishment for adoption and safe surrendering. Due to peer review requirements in the state curriculum adoption process, the materials not been finalized. This is an important method for reaching expectant teen mothers who may be at-risk for abandoning their babies. Enacting this recommendation with the CDSS should be a priority in contributing to the County's concerted effort to reduce the number of abandoned babies in Los Angeles County.

<p style="text-align: center;">Attachment B <i>SAFE HAVEN TASK FORCE Phase II</i> MEMBERSHIP</p>

The Children's Planning Council wishes to express its appreciation to the following individuals who contributed to the development of this report and its recommendations.

Safe Haven Task Force Members

Yolie Flores Aguilar (Co-Chair), Children's Planning Council
Cynthia Harding (Co-Chair), Los Angeles County Department of Health Services
Victor Abalos, Los Angeles County Children and Families First 5 LA
Nancy Au, Los Angeles County Children and Families First 5 LA Commission
Pamela Booth, Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office
Teri Breuer, County Counsel, Los Angeles County
Teresa Contreras, California Department of Social Services
Rev. Kathy Cooper-Ledesma, California Council of Churches
Victoria Evers, Department of Public Social Services
Al Fraijo, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
Garrison Frost, Los Angeles County Children and Families First 5 LA
Eldyne Gray, Planned Parenthood
Kristina Hajjar, Los Angeles County Fire Department
Dena Jensen, Perinatal Advisory Council—Leadership, Advocacy, and Consultation
Susan Kaplan, Friends of the Family
Evelyn Martinez, Los Angeles County Children and Families First—First 5 LA Commission
Deena Margolis, Chief Administrative Office
Sandra Rudnick, Los Angeles County Commission for Children and Families
Joi Russell, Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services
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Ilda Rueda DeLeon, Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
Frank Kwan, Los Angeles County Office of Education
Elisa Nicholas, The Children's Clinic
Carolina Reyes, LA Best Babies Collaborative (LABBC)
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Project Staff

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Safe Haven Task Force II**Excerpts from ICAN's *Safely Surrendered and Abandoned Infants*
in Los Angeles County – 2002/2003****What Have We Learned from the Data?**

Data on safely surrendered and abandoned infants are collected by ICAN in an effort to determine how to best implement the Safe Haven Law in Los Angeles County. Efforts are made to gather information about mothers who safely surrendered their infants and those who abandoned their newborns in an unsafe manner to see if there are differences in these two groups or if either group “fit a profile.”

The following information is based on data collected for 2002 and 2003, which indicate that mothers who surrender or abandon their children do not *typically* fit the stereotypical picture of a young, unmarried teenager with no other children. While data collected for 2004 and 2005, to date, have not been fully analyzed, they appear consistent with data gathered and analyzed for 2002 and 2003.

MOTHERS' AGES

- The known age range of mothers who *safely surrendered* their infants in 2002 is from 17 to 42 years, with an average age of 28 years; four of the five mothers whose ages were known were age 25 or over. While the known ages of mothers who *abandoned* their infants in 2002 ranged from 16 to 34 years and averaged a somewhat younger age of 23, sample sizes are too small to indicate a statistically significant difference between the two groups.
- The known age range of mothers who *safely surrendered* their infants in 2003 is from 17 to 31 years, with an average age of 22 ½ years. Of the 8 mothers who *abandoned* their infants in 2003, ages of only two mothers are known; one mother was age 16 at the time she abandoned her child and the other mother was age 22.

MOTHERS' FAMILY SITUATIONS

Mothers who safely surrendered their infants were sometimes married and/or had other children, and in fact, those mothers who stated their motivation for surrendering their infants frequently mentioned an inability to care for another child.

- In 2002, two *surrendering* mothers were known to have been married at the time of surrender. For the five *abandoning* mothers who were identified in 2002, two had

older children at the time of the abandonment. None of the identified abandoning mothers were married at the time of the abandonment.

- In 2003, information about family circumstances was known for four of the eight *surrendering* mothers. Of these four, it is known that three mothers were unmarried and it is unknown if the fourth was married. Three surrendering mothers were known to have other children while one did not. Of the eight *abandoning* mothers in 2003 only two were identified and both were single and had no other children.

ETHNICITY

Mothers who surrendered and abandoned their infants did not differ from one another by ethnicity and did not fit a specific type of ethnic or socioeconomic picture. In 2002, safely surrendered and abandoned infants were Hispanic, Caucasian and African American. In 2003, in addition to Hispanic, African American and Caucasian infants, two infants of Filipino ethnicity were abandoned.

- In 2002, the majority of children safely surrendered *and* abandoned were Hispanic (13 of 23); in Los Angeles County the Hispanic birth rate outpaces birth rates among African American, Caucasian and Asian/Pacific Islander women. African Americans represented 7 of the 23 infants; at almost a third of the infants, this number outpaces the number of African American births in Los Angeles County. Caucasians represented 2 of the infants for whom data were collected, and one deceased abandoned infant was of unknown ethnicity.
- As in 2002, in 2003, the most represented ethnic group of safely surrendered and abandoned children were Hispanic (5 of 16), followed by Caucasian infants (4 of 16) and African American infants (3 of 16). In addition two Asian/Pacific Islander (Filipino) infants and two infants of unknown ethnicity were abandoned.

SOCIOECONOMIC/GEOGRAPHIC FACTORS

2002

In terms of socioeconomic/geographic factors, mothers of abandoned and surrendered infants crossed the spectrum in 2002. However, it is notable that in 2002, 7 of the 13 abandoned infants (two who survived and five who died) and 7 of the 10 surrendered infants were found/surrendered in economically depressed neighborhoods in Service Planning Areas (SPAs) 6, 7 and 8, SPAs with higher numbers of youth living below the poverty line. Further, six of these infants were found/surrendered within a few miles of the Harbor Freeway in more impoverished areas of the County. On the other hand, no infants were abandoned or surrendered in SPA 5, a SPA with significantly fewer children living below the poverty line. Finally, of the five surrendering parties who provided information as to their motivation to surrender, four indicated that they could not provide for the infant they were surrendering. One of these families indicated that they were homeless. In 2002, economic factors appeared to play a role in the cases of infant abandonment and surrender in Los Angeles County. This would indicate that

impoverished living conditions, access to medical care and social service support should be addressed when looking at the issue of infant abandonment.

Safe surrenders and infant abandonment occurred across Los Angeles County in 2002. However, as noted above, a majority of the infants who were abandoned and surrendered in 2002 were from the central, more urban part of the County where higher numbers of children live in poverty. No reports of surrendered or abandoned infants were reported in SPA 5 (West Los Angeles) and one infant was abandoned in SPA 1 (Antelope Valley), two SPAs with the lowest numbers of children living below poverty.

2003

As in 2002, mothers of abandoned and surrendered infants crossed the socioeconomic/geographic spectrum in 2003. However, unlike the infants abandoned and surrendered in 2002, there was no “clustering” of cases in specific SPAs, especially those with higher poverty levels in 2003. It is of note that four infants were abandoned and three infants were safely surrendered in SPAs 6, 7 and 8, SPAs with higher levels of child poverty. However, no infants were abandoned and one infant was safely surrendered in SPA 4, which has one of the highest levels of child poverty in the County. In addition, the two SPAs with the lowest levels of children living in poverty, SPA 1 and SPA 5, experienced between them one case of safe surrender and two cases of abandoned deceased infants. It should be noted that one of the abandoned deceased infants in SPA 5 was found in the Marina del Rey Harbor, and it is unknown where this infant’s body was originally abandoned or where the infant’s mother resided at the time of the infant’s birth/death. Unfortunately, very little is known about mothers’ motivation for surrendering their infants in 2003; while economics is potentially a real factor, it cannot be stated with certainty that economic factors played a role in surrendering decisions in 2003.

In 2003, safe surrenders and infant abandonment occurred across Los Angeles County, and events occurred in all eight SPAs. Although a number of these events occurred in more urban areas of the County where children live in poverty, incidents of abandonment and surrender also occurred in areas populated by those of middle and upper economic statuses in 2003.

In summary, a review of the cases of infant abandonment and safe surrender in 2002 suggests that public information campaigns target communities where abandonment and the possibility of safe surrenders are most prevalent. However, data from 2003 speak to the importance of public information efforts that not only target such at-risk communities, but reach all areas and socioeconomic groups in Los Angeles County. This calls for a broad countywide effort.

Safely Surrendered and Abandoned Infants
Los Angeles County
1999 – 2005

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005**
Safely Surrendered			0	10	8	10	4
Abandoned Surviving	?	?	3	5	1	1	0
Abandoned Deceased	6	3	11	8	7	7	2

** 2005 statistics, to date (2/22/05)

Safely Surrendered and Abandoned Infants in Los Angeles County – 2004**Safely Surrendered (10)**

01/02/04	female Hispanic, surrendered at Mission Community Hospital, Panorama City
01/21/04	male, ethnicity unknown, surrendered at Los Alamitos Hospital, Los Alamitos
03/18/04	male, ethnicity unknown (possibly Caucasian or Hispanic) surrendered at Downey Fire Station, Downey
03/20/04	male African American, surrendered at Long Beach Memorial Hospital, Long Beach
04/08/04	female Hispanic, surrendered at East Los Angeles Doctors Hospital, Los Angeles, 90022
04/09/04	male Caucasian, surrendered at Pomona Valley Medical Center, Pomona
05/24/04	male African American, surrendered at Fire Department #116
09/06/04	female Caucasian, surrendered at Fire Station #57, South Gate
09/27/04	male Caucasian, surrendered at Fire Station #123, Santa Clarita
11/13/04	female African American, surrendered at Fire Station #57, Los Angeles, 90044

Abandoned - Surviving (1)

01/13/04	female Hispanic found in plastic bag in residential yard, Los Angeles, 90038
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Abandoned – Deceased (7)

01/25/04	female Hispanic found in canvas bag under residence bed, San Dimas, mother age 15
04/22/04	female Caucasian left in dumpster, Central Los Angeles, mother age 19
05/31/04	male Hispanic found in residential trash, Whittier
09/22/04	female Caucasian left in dumpster, Sylmar
09/30/04	female Hispanic found in trash recovered from Avalon
11/10/04	female Hispanic/Filipina found in trash can in Pacoima, mother age 18
12/22/04	female of unknown ethnicity found in crawl space beneath apartments, Los Angeles 90023

**Safely Surrendered and Abandoned Infants in Los Angeles County – 2005
as of 2/22/05**

Safely Surrendered (4)

1/13/05	male Hispanic surrendered at Good Samaritan Hospital, Los Angeles, 90017
2/4/05	male Hispanic surrendered at LA County Fire Station, Pomona, 91766
2/16/05	female Hispanic surrendered at Long Beach Memorial Hospital, 90806
2/16/05	female Caucasian surrendered at Long Beach Memorial Hospital, 90806

Abandoned - Surviving (0)

Abandoned – Deceased (2)

01/09/05	female Hispanic found in street in front of a church, Los Angeles, 90018
02/21/05	female Hispanic found in residence bathtub, La Crescenta, 91214

<p style="text-align: center;">IMPLEMENTATION STATUS: SAFE HAVEN TASK FORCE I RECOMMENDATIONS BY STRATEGY</p>
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LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE STRATEGY

Recommendation: Propose and lobby for amendments to enhance the implementation of the Safely Surrendered Baby (SSB) Law:

Accomplishments:

The following amendments were enacted into law (2003):

- Protecting the confidentiality of the surrendering parent.
- Posting uniform signage developed by Los Angeles County in consultation with the State.
- Requiring Safe Surrender Sites to notify Child Protective Services (CPS) as soon as possible after an infant is surrendered.
- Requiring CPS to report all safe surrenders to the California Missing Children's Clearinghouse.
- Clarifying that possession of the baby's ankle bracelet does not establish parentage or right to custody of a child.

The following amendment was enacted into law in 2004:

- Providing protection to a person who, without compensation and in good faith, assists in a safe surrender.

Recommendation: Create new safe surrender sites within Los Angeles County that meet Task Force-approved criteria:

Accomplishment: Safe Surrender Sites were expanded to include:

- All County, Los Angeles City and almost all other municipal fire stations in the County are designated as Safe Surrender Sites

PROGRAMMATIC STRATEGY

Recommendation: Develop a standardized training curriculum for County and community providers and families.

Accomplishments:

- In September 2003, the Children's Planning Council (CPC), the Interagency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN), County staff and community representatives issued a standardized SSB Law training module to educate health and human services

providers, and families about the SSB Law, relinquishment options, and steps to prevent the abandonment of infants.

- The training module includes the trainers' curriculum, a PowerPoint presentation, and camera-ready handouts.

Recommendation: Include staff in discussions about the SSB Law during annual in-service programs.

Accomplishment: In September 2003, the County issued the standardized training module to all County Department Heads, with a cover memo from Supervisor Knabe, requesting the Department Heads engage appropriate staff in training about the SSB Law and to share this same information with their contracted agencies.

Recommendation: Add SSB Law information in middle- and high school curricula.

Accomplishment: In 2003, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) adapted a curriculum for use in California middle- and high school health and civics classes. CDSS, with input from the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) and school districts throughout California, is assessing the proposed curriculum.

Recommendation: Initiate systematic data collection about safely surrendered and abandoned babies.

Accomplishments:

- In mid-2002, ICAN established a systematic data collection, analysis and reporting process.
- ICAN provides ongoing updates to the Board of Supervisors, Chief Administrative Office (CAO), the Children's Planning Council (CPC), CDSS and other County and community partners, as cases of safe surrender and infant abandonment occur.

PUBLIC INFORMATION STRATEGY

Recommendation: Create a multi-faceted public information campaign to improve the general public's awareness of the SSB Law.

Accomplishments:

- Since July 2002, INFO LINE has sponsored and staffed a SSB Hotline.
- CPC and the CAO developed the Safe Surrender Site logo, which is being used as a uniform site marker at all designated sites and has been adopted across the State.
- In August 2002, the First 5 LA Board of Commissioners approved \$500,000 to \$1 million for the funding of a public information campaign.
- In February 2003, the County launched www.babysafela.org to provide easily accessible and up-to-date information about the SSB Law.
- In July 2003, First 5 LA, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), and the CAO distributed customized information packets to all County health and human services departments and 5,000 community-based organizations.

- In October 2003, First 5 LA launched a transit ad campaign that ran on 270 Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) bus exteriors, 525 MTS bus interiors, and 55 transit shelters countywide for a period of four months.
- On an ongoing basis, First 5 LA, Supervisor Knabe's office, and Task Force I representatives have reached out to local media and appeared on TV and radio talk shows to inform the general public about the SSB Law.

Recommendation: Add information about the SSB Law and support groups and organizations onto the Countywide Web Portal.

Accomplishment: In February 2003, the County's Web Page www.babysafela.org launched and continues to provide up-to-date information about the SSB Law.

Recommendation: Provide information about the SSB Law to County hotline staff.

Accomplishment: In July 2003, County departments and community-based providers that fund or administer hotlines received public information packets.

Recommendation: Establish a SSB Law Speaker's Bureau.

Accomplishments:

- In November 2003, ICAN launched a Speakers Bureau, which it continues to offer.
- In November 2003, ICAN and DCFS provided a Train-the-Trainer session for County and community providers.
- Currently, information about the Speakers Bureau is available on the County's SSB Law web page.

Recommendation: Inform all current and new County employees about the SSB Law.

Accomplishments:

- Since June 2003, during new employee orientations and/or at the time of employees' annual performance evaluations, all County employees are informed of the SSB Law and the Board's commitment to implement it.
- In June 2003, pay warrants for all County employees included a message about the SSB Law.
- In August 2003, the County Digest newsletter to all County employees included an article about the SSB Law and the Board's commitment to implement it.

Recommendation: Inform staff of County contractors about the SSB Law.

Accomplishment: Since March 2003, all County contractors have been required to provide information to their employees about the SSB Law and its implementation in Los Angeles County.